

Donovan News

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... keeping in touch with clients and other friends ...

History provides good value for money

Some people regard a commissioned history as something too expensive to contemplate at best, and a waste of money at worst. It is neither. A good commissioned history by an experienced historian will certainly come at a cost, but not a great one in comparison to the many other costs of conducting business. The cost of one television commercial may be far greater than that of a commissioned history. The cost of an annual report or a regular company newsletter may not be very different to that of a history. Moreover, the commissioning of a company history is a once in a lifetime expense.

Providing a copy of the company's history to each staff member is often far less expensive than some of the benefits that staff already enjoy, and it may be far more useful.

Regardless of the cost, a commissioned history can have many benefits for a company or organisation. It can be used to recognise the contributions of many individuals to a company and can be of more lasting benefit to staff than a Christmas party or a reward such as a holiday in some resort. A commissioned history can help explain the corporate culture to staff in a way that can be more effective and less expensive than the costs of a management consultant or those of a conference or retreat. Alternatively, the company history can be used as an sophisticated marketing tool to demonstrate to potential clients or consumers the products and services provided by the company more effectively than a costly advertising campaign.

The cost of commissioning a history need not be seen as an additional expense. It can legitimately be seen as part of the marketing budget or perhaps that of the training and development program. A history project should be considered as a project complementing activities already undertaken by a company rather than one competing for funding dollars.

A company should take pride in its past because this sets it apart from others, particularly those that have yet to prove themselves.

...AND WE'LL COME BACK
IN A CENTURY TO RECORD
THE COMPANY'S SECOND
HUNDRED YEARS..



PROJECT UPDATE

Donovan & Associates has been particularly busy since the previous *News* which helps to explain but not excuse the delay in the publication of this issue.

Our heritage survey of the Flinders Ranges has been completed and was officially launched by David Wotten, the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources at the Kanyaka ruins in the Flinders Ranges on 6 September. The final report ran to nine volumes.

The history of the Pastoral Board of South Australia has been delivered to the printers and should be published soon after Christmas. David Wotten has already agreed to launch the book.

Work on the centenary history of Sacred Heart College continues and will do so for much of 1995-96.

Our project documenting the local heritage of the City of Marion has been completed. This will form an important part of the planning initiatives of the Marion Council.

The physical and historical documentation of Army drill halls at Alberton, Beulah Park and Somerton Park was completed for the Department of Defence.

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Project Update continued

Preparation of the history of the Wakehurst Golf Club at Seaforth in metropolitan Sydney is well under way and is due to be completed in April 1996 to enable publication early in 1997 to commemorate the first 25 turbulent years of the club.

NEW PROJECTS

Several new projects have been garnered by **Donovan & Associates** since the previous *News*.

During August **D & A** began work on a project to update the history of the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville which was formed when the Hindmarsh and Woodville councils amalgamated in 1993. A history of Hindmarsh was published in 1974 and one of Woodville followed in 1977. The idea of the current project is to record the recent history of each of these areas and that of events leading to the amalgamation.

In September **D & A** was commissioned to write a short history of the Strzelecki Track. The commission followed a visit by Diana Laidlaw, the Minister of Road Transport, to Innamincka to see work currently being undertaken to re-align the northernmost part of the Track. It is intended to launch the history at the opening of this new work.

Donovan & Associates was also involved with other road works when it was called upon to assess the heritage significance of the remains of an early building near Reynella and which is on the alignment of the proposed Southern Expressway.

Schooldays

Donovan & Associates has been engaged in researching and writing the history of the Marist Brothers' Sacred Heart College at Somerton Park for a little more than 12 months. The project is a joint venture with historian, Bernard O'Neil, which has been planned as one of several initiatives to mark the centenary of the College in 1997.

The College has a fascinating history. It began at Port Adelaide in 1897, moved to Semaphore then Largs Bay before relocating to Paringa Hall, the Cudmore family home, in 1914. It has been a boarding school for boys ever since the Semaphore years and for most of its history has provided a Catholic education from Grade 4 to the end of secondary school.

Successful old scholars are proof of the success of the school. Five bishops and numerous priests and brothers are testimony to the Catholic education provided by the College. So too, the numerous old scholars in the professions highlights the value of the secular education that they received. Old scholars shone in many pursuits after leaving Sacred Heart. Robert Stigwood, who gained an international reputation as the manager of prominent entertainers, honed his skills producing entertainment at the College: Bart Cummings rose to prominence in the racing industry: Graham Spurling became a business leader with Mitsubishi Motors and Pacific Dunlop. Sport figured prominently in the tradition of the College and many students went on to excel in their sports, including Andrew Sincock who became a Test cricketer, John Fitzgerald who won renown in tennis: and many League footballers such as Wally Dittmar who played for Port Adelaide.

All those associated with Sacred Heart — students, teachers, parents, old scholars — have helped to mould its spirit and traditions within a changing environment. In recent years, however, the challenges have been greater than at almost any time in the history of the College. In 1977 the College became co-educational when senior girls from Marymount College transferred to Sacred Heart in order to complete their education. The following year Sacred Heart became part of the South West Region Scheme, and in succeeding years shed its lower classes to become a senior school for students only in Years 10, 11 and 12 and primarily drawn from two 'middle schools' in the region.

The changes at Sacred Heart have been immense and have ensured that the College will continue to be relevant during its second century. The changes have also underscored the need for a history in order to explain to those currently associated with Sacred Heart the traditions which they have inherited.

LOTS OF NAMES AND DATES—WHAT MORE COULD A HISTORIAN ASK?



From Tip to Tee

The history of Wakehurst Golf Club at Seaforth, in Sydney's northern suburbs, is a fascinating one. The course, opened in 1972, is magnificently sited in natural park country on the eastern side of a high ridge above the Manly dam. This provided both the attraction and the challenge for early members.

The construction of the course in such difficult terrain was expensive and the limited funds that were available, even with a substantial bank loan, meant that economies had to be made where possible. Stories abound of members spending hours at a time in working bees to remove stones from the fairways. It was a difficult course to play when it opened and this persuaded many members to go elsewhere which only increased the financial burden on those who remained. Even financing the loan was difficult during a period of rapid inflation. Many money raising activities were tried. They were marvellous social occasions but did little to change the dire financial position which remained until the Club secured a contractor who was willing to pay for the privilege of disposing of clean fill on the course. Beginning in 1984 the Club generated funds from the filling operation and succeeded in remodelling much of the course. By 1995 when the filling was completed the Club was free of debt, had a healthy bank account, a magnificent course with panoramic views and a waiting list of potential members.



Above: Leonie Randail (left) and June Donovan (right) viewing the Wakehurst golf course. Below: the view of the course from the clubhouse.



NEW FACES

Donovan & Associates has been pleased to welcome two new historians to the firm since the previous *News*, Leonie Randall and Mary Geyer.

Leonie has been working primarily on the history of the Wakehurst Golf Club with June Donovan but has also been contributing to the history of Sacred Heart College.

She is a graduate and a PhD student from the Flinders University of South Australia. Her PhD thesis is concerned with sports history and she has gained considerable experience in the field after working as a research assistant for Professor Wray Vamplew who, before his promotion to a Chair in England, was a leading sports historian in Australia.

Mary graduated with an Honours degree in History from the University of Adelaide. Since that time she has worked in the History Trust of South Australia, particularly at the Migration Museum. She has authored two publications, *Behind the Wall: The Women of the Destitute Asylum, Adelaide, 1852-1918*, and *From Many Places: The History and Cultural Traditions of South Australian People*.

Mary has been concentrating on the history of the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville.

Copy editing of the *News* is by Bernard O'Neil. The cartoons are by Stephen Stanley.

Donovan & Associates: the first 15 years

On 16 December 1995 Donovan & Associates celebrates the fifteenth anniversary of its registration. The occasion has been marked by the redesign of the *Donovan News*.

The firm was launched soon after Peter and June Donovan returned to Australia after Peter had completed study in architectural conservation at the International Centre for Conservation in Rome. It was launched on the strength of a grant from the Northern Territory government under its History Award scheme, to write a history of the Territory from 1911 to 1978: this was to complement a history of the Territory from 1863 to 1911 which had been Peter's MA thesis.

D & A has moved a long way since then and has been at the forefront in the development of Public History in Australia. Even before the Northern Territory history was launched the firm had begun work on the heritage survey of the City of Adelaide in a joint venture with other consultants. This was one of the most significant heritage studies in South Australia to that time, but since then the firm has continued to be associated with landmark heritage surveys — the Flinders Ranges survey being the most recent.

Commissioned histories, now numbering more than two dozen, have been the backbone of the firm's work. D & A is delighted to count several of Australia's significant companies among its clients: they range from Faulding, which is more than 150 years old, to a subsidiary of Goodman Fielder, which is younger than D & A.

During its 15 years the firm has undertaken a broad range of projects in many parts of Australia and has gathered valuable experience from each of them. This has helped to ensure that D & A remains alive to the diverse demands of our many valued clients.

HOW CAN YOU
HAVE HEADACHES
WRITING THE
HISTORY OF A
PHARMACEUTICAL
COMPANY??



DONOVAN & ASSOCIATES History & Historic Preservation Consultants

Donovan & Associates is a consulting firm which specialises in matters relating to aspects of historical research, writing and historic conservation and undertakes a wide variety of tasks based upon these specialties. Major projects completed by the firm include large commissioned histories and heritage studies, recording of oral history, and providing advice on historical records management.

Donovan & Associates was established in 1980 and since that time has undertaken work for clients throughout south-eastern Australia on projects that have involved research and work in all parts of the country.

Donovan & Associates' services include:

- Corporate and institutional history
- Regional and local history
- Heritage survey and assessment
- Oral history programs
- Advice on cultural tourism
- Advice on historical displays

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